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THE ORIGIN OF ART.

THE ancient forms of expression point to clay as the earliest material of art, for the workmanship of the potter and of the shaper or image-cutter is denoted by the same word. Subsequently, not only during the flower of art, but also when



FRAGMENT OF POSTER "THE MASQUERADERS." BY W. H. BRADLEY.

that period had passed, clay continued to be the first material used by artists. The ancient artists not only prepared models to assist them in their work and for the workshop, but they also strove to distinguish themselves even in the most brilliant period of art by a public display of works in clay, as well as in marble and bronze. Besides the emulation in the kind of work which such a public display of models maintained among the artists, it also tended to make the judgment of others as to their skill more correct and thorough, since modeling in clay is to the sculptor what drawing on paper is to the painter, for as the first gush of the grape-juice from the press forms the finest wine, so in the soft material and on paper the genius of the artist is seen in its utmost purity and truth; while, on the contrary, it is concealed beneath the industry and the polish required in a finished painting and a completed statue.

As the edifices of the most ancient Greeks were made of wood earlier than of stone or marble, so also were their statues, which was even the case with the palaces of the Median kings. There are found in Egypt even at the present day figures made of wood—that is, sycamore—and many museums have such to exhibit. Wood long remained the material used for statuary. Ivory, too, had in the earlier stages been in use as an art material, chiefly in value for sword and dagger handles and sheaths, and even bedsteads. The thrones of the kings and consuls in Rome were made of ivory. In conjunction with gold this exquisite natural product was used to produce many articles most highly prized in the present day. Such are the beautiful statue of Æsculapius in Arcadia and an image of Pallas in Achaia, both of ivory and gold. The oft-recurring disputes as to the use of color upon Greek statuary is forever set at rest, the statue of Pallas in Achaia being generally admitted to have been tinted, but I venture to think this, though done by Greeks, ... illegitimate addition to their art work. With the exception

of a few small figures, no traces of ivory statues have yet been found, notwithstanding the many discoveries that have been made, because ivory decomposes in the earth, like the teeth of all other animals, with the exception of the wolf. Marble and stone, gold and the other precious metals were in succession brought into requisition, and, thanks to the everlasting qualities they possess, the art of the Egyptians, Etruscans and Greeks lives yet, and will exist to all time to come. The Almighty, in creating man and ordaining him with noble powers, insured him the possession of material lasting as the truths art alone bequeaths to the world, and successive ages shall enjoy and profit by the noble work of the ancients.

EAST INDIAN ART WARES.

NO greater contrast to the productions of American industrial art can be found than in the carved and inlaid furniture of East Indian manufacture, consisting of cabinets, carved screens, corner brackets, tables, flower-stands, pedestals, picture frames, glove boxes, etc., in sandalwood, blackwood and rosewood, ivory inlaid tables, Benares brass ware, Cashmere copper ware, Moradabad enameled ware, Mooltan and other Indian pottery, in Oriental colors. The various pieces are prodigies of patient labor, exhibiting finely executed work of very elaborate and interesting designs. The carved sandalwood boxes in particular are marvels of careful and artistic workmanship. The boxes, inlaid with silver and ornamented with carved ivory filigree work, are most beautifully executed.

Hand-painted curtains exhibit a distinct individuality, both in the nature of the articles and the method of manufacture. The



ILLUSTRATION FOR CHICAGO TRIBUNE. BY W. H. BRADLEY.

designs are hand-painted, both by blocks and brushes, and are highly ingenious. Only vegetable dyes, warranted to withstand light and known to be durable, are used. Embroidered cushions and table covers are also in evidence, together with hand-painted punkahs, date, kus-kus and talc fans, heart-shaped and beetle wing fans, decorated with peacock feathers. One of the largest New York importers of such goods are themselves manufacturers, and, in consequence, are able to supply the trade at exceptionally low prices.